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SOURCE Newspapers as indicated.

ALBANIAN FARMERS SUFFER UNDER FORCED DELIVERIES;
GOVERNMENT REDUCES BASIC FOOD COSTS

DELIVERY QUOTAS SEVERE -- Flamuri, No 3/4, Mar/Apr 50 [anti-Communist]

Despite the so-called agrarian reforms, the Albanian farmer is taxed so heavily that he now works exclusively for the state. The government has given each farmer 50 dynyms [12½ acres] of land, but demands from the farmer for every dynym, 27 kilograms of grain, 8 kilograms of meat, one kilogram of wool, and 6 eggs, if the land is determined to be of the third category. If it is in the second or first category, the payments to the government are heavier.

Even though the farmer raises no animals, the government demands wool and meat from him. If the land given to the Albanian farmer happens to be rocky, wooded, or swampy, or if he is unable to work the land because he is too old or sick, or because his sons have been taken away by the government for the Army or forced labor, he still has to pay taxes on the land. Many are happy when the land is taken away from them for nonpayment of taxes, and they themselves are sent as laborers to work in mines or on railroads.

The state pays the farmer 350 lek for each quintal of corn, while he has to pay 7,000-8,000 lek if he wants to buy corn on the black market. The state pays the farmer 30 lek for wool while the black market price for it is 1,500 lek. The farmer cannot buy any goods that he needs with the money the government gives him for his products, because trading is done by barter. The storekeeper actually exchanges his goods for cheese, wool, butter, etc.

Taxes on domestic animals are as heavy as those on land. If a farmer has passed through a severe winter and several of his animals have died, he must pay taxes in March for all animals registered in early fall, because the Albanian government uses "anticipatory plans."

Quite often, in order to win the favor of their superiors, government employees try to exceed the State Plan by extracting from the people more than the assigned quotas. The situation of the workers is no better than that of the farmers. Theoretically, workers are paid 130 lek per day, but part of this goes for "voluntary help" and another part is returned to the state as a loan.

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In the Gjinokastër district, Sybhi Bakiri persuaded the workers of the local leather factory to propose "voluntarily" a loan to the state for 20 years, and after approval came from Tirana, he went out among the villages and towns of the Gjinokastër district demanding that the loan be fulfilled. If any person did not contribute toward the loan, he was accused of being a "reactionary," imprisoned, and tortured.

CUT FOOD PRICES -- Liria, No 434, 28 Apr 50

Tirana, 1 April -- According to a decision of the Council of Ministers, effective 1 April 1950, food prices on the free market and under rationing are to be reduced. On the free market, the price of sugar will be reduced 28.57 percent, macaroni 20 percent, dried beans 34 percent, cigarette paper 20 percent, cotton cloth an average of 20 percent, silk fabric 28 percent, domestic liquors and beer 10 to 22 percent, and other foodstuffs 29 to 40 percent. On the rationed market, marmalade and egg prices will be reduced 20 percent.

Tirana, 5 April -- As the result of the reduction in prices on the free and guaranteed markets in accordance with the decision of the Council of Ministers of 31 March, a reduction in food prices on the cooperative and village markets also has been observed. In comparison with prices in February 1949, the price of potatoes is down 60.5 percent, beans 9.3 percent, vegetables 43.3 percent, and fruits 29.5 percent. In comparison with August 1949 prices, in February 1950 the price of butter was down 43 percent, cheese 29.3 percent, and eggs 30.6 percent.

Food expenditures for a family in Tirana dropped to an index of 92.2 in February 1949 and to 82.5 in March 1950 (first quarter of 1948 equals 100).

Taegliche Rundschau, No 63, 15 Mar 50

Price reductions of 23 percent for milk products, 20 percent for cereals, 11 percent for cheese, 22 percent for eggs, 5 percent for potatoes, and 22 percent for vegetables have recently taken effect in Albania.

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